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 APPROVED BY: D/HA: PDERIAN

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STAIRS

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 11, LINES 2,3)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, PFOR, AG

SUBJECT: DERIAN MEETING WITH MINISTER OF INTERIOR

1. SUMMARY: HUMAN RIGHTS COORDINATOR MET WITH MINISTER OF INTERIOR ON AUGUST 10. THERE SEEMED TO BE SOME CONFUSION AS TO WHO HAD REQUESTED THE MEETING. THE MINISTER STRESSED HIS DUTY IN PROTECTING THE MAJORITY OF THE ARGENTINE PEOPLE IN A TIME OF WAR AGAINST SUBVERSION. MRS. DERIAN STRESSED THAT THE TIME HAD NOW ARRIVED FOR A RETURN TO DUE PROCESS.

2. MRS. DERIAN STARTED BY EXPLAINING TO THE MINISTER THAT SHE WAS VERY CONCERNED WITH THE ENORMOUS NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO HAD DISAPPEARED, THE NUMBER IN JAIL WITHOUT CHARGES, THE NUMBER WHICH IS SIMPLY LOST AND THE NUMBER FOUND INNOCENT.

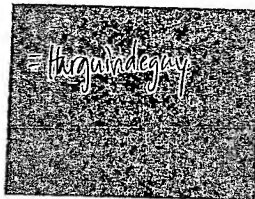
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WHO REMAIN IN JAIL. SHE SAID IT APPEARS THAT ONCE A PERSON IS PICKED UP IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO GET RELEASED. SHE REFERRED TO THE HARD FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM, STATING THAT SHE THOUGHT THE BACK OF THE TERRORISTS HAD NOW BEEN BROKEN. SHE WORRIED THAT WHEN A WIDE NET IS CAST MANY INNOCENT PEOPLE GET CAUGHT. SHE EXPLAINED THAT THE CHIEF OBSTACLE FOR RETURNING TO NORMAL RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. IS OUR CONCERN FOR THE MASS OF PEOPLE CAUGHT IN THE SYSTEM WITH NOTHING HAPPENING. SHE CITED PARTICULAR CONCERN FOR JACOBO TIMMERMAN AS A PERSON WHO HAS BECOME A SYMBOL OF THIS PROBLEM. SHE NOTED THAT WHEN SHE TALKS WITH HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS THEY SPEAK OF REGULARIZING PROCEDURES, BUT THAT WHEN SHE TALKS TO INDIVIDUALS IT APPEARS THAT THESE PLANS AREN'T BEING CARRIED OUT IN PRACTICE.

3. THE MINISTER RESPONDED THAT HER PREOCCUPATION FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE PERSON ARE NO LESS THAN THE RESPONSIBILITY THE GOA HAS FOR INTERNAL SECURITY. HE SAID THE GOA WAS FIGHTING AN UNDECLARED WAR AND OPERATING UNDER THE EXCEPTIONS GRANTED BY THE CONSTITUTION. HE SAID THIS PERMITTED THE GOVERNMENT TO SHIFT PEOPLE FROM ONE PLACE TO THE OTHER UNLESS THEY EXERCISED THE RIGHT OF OPTION. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THIS RIGHT WAS SUSPENDED BECAUSE THE GOVERN-



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MOTHERS AND WIVES JOIN TOGETHER IN THE PLAZA EVERY THURSDAY AND CALL ON DIFFERENT OFFICES, INCLUDING THAT IN THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, SEEKING INFORMATION ON THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS. SHE ALSO REFERRED TO LABOR LEADERS IN JAIL SINCE 1975.

5. THE MINISTER SAID THAT HE TOO HAD TALKED TO WOMEN WHOSE FAMILY MEMBERS DISAPPEARED AND THAT THERE WAS AN OFFICE IN HIS MINISTRY TO DEAL WITH THEIR INQUIRIES. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT IF THESE WOMEN JOINED TOGETHER IN CONCERTED ACTION AND, IN EFFECT, ARE DEMONSTRATING WITHOUT A PERMIT, THAT THIS WOULD BE AGAINST THE LAW. HE ASKED MRS. DERIAN TO CONSIDER THE CAUSES FOR DISAPPEARANCES.

6. SHE SAID SHE HAD HEARD THEM MANY TIMES AND HAD SEEN A BIG BOOK, THAT SHE UNDERSTOOD THE GOA'S PROBLEM WITH TERRORISM BUT DID NOT UNDERSTAND A GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD NOT FURNISH THE NAMES OF THE TERRORISTS.

7. THE MINISTER REFERRED TO THE FACT THAT THOSE DETAINED WERE IN NORMAL JAILS AND THAT ARGENTINE JAILS WERE OPEN TO THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS (ICRC). HE SHOWED HER, BUT DID NOT GIVE HER, COPIES IN SPANISH OF ICRC REPORTS. MRS. DERIAN SPECULATED THAT PRISONERS MIGHT BE HELD IN OTHER PLACES WHICH THE RED CROSS HAS NOT SEEN. THE MINISTER SAID THEY LET THE RED CROSS GO WHEREVER IT WANTS, INCLUDING TO MILITARY INSTITUTIONS. HE SAID THERE WERE NO CONCENTRATION CAMPS. ASKED ABOUT THE NAVY MECHANICAL SCHOOL, HE SAID PEOPLE MIGHT BE HELD FOR INTERROGATION IN SUCH PLACE BUT WOULD NOT BE JAILED THERE. HE SAID SUBVERSIVES ARE JAILED IN THE MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISONS.

8. MRS. DERIAN ASKED THE MINISTER WHAT WERE THE NORMS FOR INTERROGATION. THE MINISTER RESPONDED THAT WHEN THE FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM STARTED, THOSE CAUGHT WERE TOUGH AND HIGHLY DISCIPLINED AND HAD A HIGH MORALE. HE SAID THEY

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JUDICIAL INSTRUMENTS NECESSARY TO REINSTITUTE THE RIGHT OF OPTION.

9. MRS. DERIAN OBSERVED THAT IT APPEARED AS IF THE GOVERNMENT USED THE CONSTITUTION WHEN IT WAS TO ITS BENEFIT AND SUSPENDED IT OTHERWISE. THE MINISTER OBSERVED THAT IN A STATE OF WAR ONE COULDN'T LET THE ENEMY GO. MRS. DERIAN OBSERVED THAT IN THE IDEOLOGICAL KIND OF WAR WHICH ARGENTINA FACED, THE GOVERNMENTS STRENGTH AND PUBLIC SUPPORT LAG IN ITS RESPECT FOR THE RULE OF LAW. SHE SAID THAT THERE WAS A LIMITED TIME WHERE PEOPLE WOULD PUT UP WITH ALMOST ANYTHING TO RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC NORMS BUT XX THAT TIME WAS VERY LIMITED. SHE COUNSELED THAT IT WAS NOW TIME FOR THE GOA TO SHOW ITS STRENGTH BY RETURNING TO LEGAL NORMS AND PUBLISHING THE NAMES OF THOSE DETAINED.

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11. RETURNING TO THE TIMMERMAN CASE, WHICH MRS. DERIAN HAD MENTIONED EARLIER, THE MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT SUPPORT THE RIGHT. HE SAID TIMMERMAN SAT IN HIS OFFICE AND LIED TO HIM ABOUT GRAVIER'S INTEREST IN HIS NEWSPAPER. HE SAID HIS CASE WAS BEING PROCESSED AND INVITED MRS. DERIAN OR THE CHARGE' TO VISIT TIMMERMAN. MRS. DERIAN RESPONDED THAT SHE WOULD LIKE THE MINISTER TO SEE HIM. THAT SHE HAD SEEN HIM ON A PREVIOUS VISIT BECAUSE HE REPRESENTED A DIFFERENT AND RESPECTED POINT OF VIEW, THAT HE HAD DEFENDED THE GOVERNMENT AT THAT TIME AND THAT HIS EDITORIALS MANIFESTED THAT SUPPORT THE MINISTER AGREED. MRS. DERIAN ADDED THAT NOT TEN DAYS AFTER SHE SAW TIMMERMAN HE WAS ARRESTED, THAT CHARGES HAVE NOT YET BEEN BROUGHT AGAINST HIM AND THAT HE HAS BEEN MOVED FROM JAIL TO JAIL AND HIS HEALTH HAS SUFFERED GREATLY.

12. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE COMMENT AND INDICATE DISTRIBUTION. VANCE

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Declassified Case: LX= 5706 Date: 06-04-2013

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~~NOTES~~ - FOR MR SCOTT, PASS DEP. ASST. SEC. DALLEY

FOL RPT STATE 193418 ACTION BUENOS AIRES 15 AUG 77 QUOTE

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E.O. 11652:

TAGS: SHUM, PFOR, AG

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FOL RPT STATE 193418 ACTION BUENOS AIRES 15 AUG 77 QUOTE

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10. THE MINISTER OBSERVED THAT MANY OF THOSE WHO HAVE DIS-APPEARED WERE NOT HELD BY THE GOVERNMENT. HE POINTED TO THE CRIME FREE ATMOSPHERE OF ARGENTINA AND STRESSED IT WAS THE GOVERNMENT'S DUTY TO PROTECT THE MANY FROM THE FEW. MRS. DERIAN ASKED HIM ABOUT PEOPLE BEING ARRESTED FOR NOT HAVING AN IDENTITY CARD AND WONDERED IF THE SITUATION IN ARGENTINA WAS LIKE THAT IN SOUTH AFRICA WHERE ALL WERE EXPECTED TO CARRY IDENTITY CARDS. THE MINISTER SAID THIS WAS THE SYSTEM.

11. RETURNING TO THE TIMMERMAN CASE, WHICH MRS. DERIAN HAD MENTIONED EARLIER, THE MINISTER SAID THE GOVERNMENT DID NOT SUPPORT THE RIGHT. HE SAID TIMMERMAN SAT IN HIS OFFICE AND LIED TO HIM ABOUT GRAVIER'S INTEREST IN HIS NEWSPAPER. HE SAID HIS CASE WAS BEING PROCESSED AND INVITED MRS. DERIAN OR THE CHARGE' TO VISIT TIMMERMAN. MRS. DERIAN RESPONDED THAT SHE WOULD LIKE THE MINISTER TO SEE HIM, THAT SHE HAD SEEN HIM ON A PREVIOUS VISIT BECAUSE HE REPRESENTED A DIFFERENT AND RESPECTED POINT OF VIEW, THAT HE HAD DEFENDED THE GOVERNMENT AT THAT TIME AND THAT HIS EDITORIALS MANIFESTED THAT SUPPORT. THE MINISTER AGREED. MRS. DERIAN ADDED THAT NOT TEN DAYS AFTER SHE SAW TIMMERMAN HE WAS ARRESTED, THAT CHARGES HAVE NOT YET BEEN BROUGHT AGAINST HIM AND THAT HE HAS BEEN MOVED FROM JAIL TO JAIL AND HIS HEALTH HAS SUFFERED GREATLY.

12. ACTION REQUESTED: PLEASE COMMENT AND INDICATE DISTRIBUTION. VANCE

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| DOC_NBR | 1977STATE193418 |
| FILM | D770309-0751, D770294-0436 |

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